

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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FODAG

PASS USDA

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: WFC, OCON
SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (WFC) FOURTH SESSION

REF: (A) ROME 8269, (B) ROME 8268, (C) STATE 113109

1. MAY 5 INFORMAL MEETING OF ROME PERMREPS TO WFC WAS TAME AFFAIR AS ROME REPS PRESENT INDICATED THEIR GOVERNMENTS HAD NOT HAD TIME TO DIGEST DOCUMENTS. THE LDC MEMBER REPS TOOK THEIR NORMAL STAND AND INDICATED THAT RECOMMENDATIONS WERE NOT STRONG ENOUGH.

2. MEETING WAS OPENED BY YUGOSLAV VICE PRESIDENT, MR. STIPETIC, WHO ACTED AS CHAIRMAN AND DELIVERED A STATEMENT SUMMARIZING RESULTS OF MAY 3-4 BUREAU MEETING. SEE REFTEL (A). BUREAU INDICATED IT BELIEVED MOST POSITIVE OUTCOME OF MEETING WOULD BE SHORT STATEMENT CONTAINING A PREMABLE DRAWING ATTENTION TO CONTINUING GRAVITY OF WORLD FOOD PROBLEM AND ELEMENTS OF THAT PROBLEM THAT NEED MOST URGENT ATTENTION, AND 6-9 DECISIONS BY MINISTERS ON ACTION NEEDED TO ADDRESS ISSUES RAISED. (COMMENT: WHILE BUREAU SUMMARY STATEMENT DOES NOT CLEARLY INDICATE IT, THIS
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STATEMENT IS BEING DRAFTED IN PRELIMINARY FORM BY SECRETARIAT AND WILL BE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSIONS WITH MEMBER COUNTRIES IN ORDER TO FINALIZE IT PRIOR TO MEETING IN MEXICO. SEE REFTEL (B).)

3. IT WAS OBVIOUS AT OUTSET OF MEETING THAT MOST PERMREPS DID NOT HAVE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON SECRETARIAT PAPERS.

COMMENTS WERE GENERAL, AND COULD BE CHARACTERIZED, AS INDICATED IN PARA 1, THE LDC'S SAYING THE RECOMMENDATIONS DO NOT GO FAR ENOUGH, THAT WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS A REAL ACTION PROGRAM. IN GENERAL, THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES INDICATED THAT THE SECRETARIAT DOCUMENTS SEEMED TO PROVIDE BASIS FOR DISCUSSION AT COUNCIL SESSION AND INDICATING THEIR VARIOUS MINISTRIES WERE ONLY NOW BEGINNING TO STUDY THOROUGHLY THE DOCUMENTS AS THEY HAD ONLY JUST RECEIVED THEM. DENMARK, NETHERLANDS, AUSTRALIA, JAPAN, AND FRANCE INDICATED THAT DISCUSSION IN MEXICO SHOULD NOT GET INVOLVED IN DETAILS OF GRAIN NEGOTIATIONS OR THE MTN. THE LDC'S OF COURSE, RESPONDED THAT CERTAINLY THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE A SUBJECT FOR THE MINISTERS TO TAKE UP AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON. U.S. MADE GENERAL STATEMENT BASED ON INSTRUCTION REF-TEL (C).

4. IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES BY LDC MEMBERS, THE SECRETARIAT INDICATED THAT COUNCIL WOULD HAVE BEFORE IT THE REPORTS OF CFA AND COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY FOR DISCUSSION THOUGH IT DOES NOT APPEAR ON AGENDA. SEVERAL PERMREPS, PARTICULARLY INDIA, EXPRESSED HOPE THAT COUNCIL WOULD BE ABLE TO REMOVE SOME OF THE BRACKETS THAT REMAIN IN THE GUIDELINE PORTION OF THE CFA REPORT.

5. INDIAN PERMREP EXPRESSED HOPE ALSO THAT COUNCIL WOULD ADDRESS QUESTION OF REPLENISHMENT OF IFAD. THERE WAS NO COMMENT ON THIS STATEMENT.
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6. SECRETARIAT DID INDICATE TO PERMREPS THAT THERE WAS NO COMMENT ON THIS STATEMENT.

6. SECRETARIAT DID INDICATE TO PERMREPS THAT THERE WOULD BE MEETING ON MAY 15-16 OF WFC SECRETARIAT WITH REPS OF UNDP, FAO, AND IBRD TO DISCUSS PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN DOCUMENT WFC/1978/5. NO COMMENT ON THIS ANNOUNCEMENT.

7. AT THIS POINT, WE WOULD SAY PRIMARY DIFFERENCES IN APPROACH TO WFC OUTPUT ARE DIFFERENCES OF EMPHASIS. JUDGING BY MAY 5 MEETING SOUTH ASIANS, YUGOSLAVS, AND OTHERS WANT TO PRESS ON GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS, SEPARATION OF FOOD AID CONVENTION FROM THESE FOOD POLICY GUIDELINES AND TRADE ISSUES. THEIR ATTITUDE ON FOOD PLANS IS THAT COUNTRIES WISHING THEM MAY PROCEED BUT THIS IS NOT THE FIRST PRIORITY.

8. US REP DREW ON REFTEL IN MANNER SUPPORTIVE OF SECRETARIAT BUT LEAVING IT CLEAR WE HAD NO QUALMS ABOUT DISCUSSION OF ANY OF ISSUES IN THEIR PAPERS AND WERE PREPARED RESOLVE DIFFERENCES.

9. COMMENT: THOUGH THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE MEETING WAS DIGNI-

FIED AND THERE WAS NO SERIOUS CONFRONTATION, DEBATE DID
INDICATED SECRETARIAT WILL HAVE SOME DIFFICULTY IN GETTING
VIEWS OF VARIOUS MEMBERS TO COINCIDE AND AGREE ON STATEMENT
THAT BUREAU HAS INDICATED IT HOPES WILL COME OUT OF COUNCIL.
IT IS MORE THAN LIKELY THAT INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON MAY 15
AND 16 WILL NOT MAKE MATTERS ANY EASIER FOR SECRETARIAT.
ALSO, THERE SEEMS TO BE A GENERAL AGREEMENT BY MOST PERMREPS
THAT DOCUMENT WFC/1978/5 WILL BE BASIS FOR DISCUSSION FOR
PREPCOM IN MEXICO EVEN THOUGH ITS THRUST IS NOT
ENTIRELY ACCEPTED. GARDNER

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